1: Jenness--94 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 671, 627

"In a society such as has just been outlined, without law-courts, judges or chiefs, without laws even save the time-honoured customs handed down from one generation to another, crime can be held in check only if the majority of the people of their own accord unite in punishing the wrongdoer. Direct action of this nature, however, can rarely be taken, because there is no common council wherein the will of the people can find a voice, no spokesman to give it public expression, and no leader to translate it into action. The shamans, who might be expected under certain circumstances to take the initiative, are rivals of one another. Moreover they are frequently men and women of little credit or standing even among their own people; they themselves are the victims of injustice quite as often as the rest. For minor offences, therefore, such as theft and abduction, there is no remedy unless the victim takes the matter into his own hands and exacts compensation or vengeance. In the summer of 1914 Uloksak saw something he coveted in the possession of another Coronation gulf Eskimo. He tried to induce the man to sell it, and when the owner refused Uloksak hacked him across the wrist and side with his knife. In February of the following year the same man was sitting in Uloksak's hut as though there had never been any feud at all. He had not forgotten the incident though, for it was he who first told us about it, apparently with the idea that he might prejudice Uloksak in our eyes."

1: Jenness--94
116, 578, 627

(1913-16) 1922

Copper Eskimo

"Feuds may be settled occasionally by single combat. I have no record among the Copper Eskimos of the regular stand-up fight such as occurs among the Netsilik Eskimos farther east. (1) They know of the custom, however, for Ilatsiak told me of a Netsilik Eskimo named Nuliagyuk who was injured for life in such a combat. He had quarrelled with Kallahea, a native rather smaller than himself, and challenged him to single combat. Nuliagyuk struck the first blow and knocked his adversary down; but the latter quickly rose and gave Nuliagyuk such a buffet on the temple that he destroyed the sight of one eye and broke or dislocated his jaw-bone. It is quite possible that similar combats happen occasionally among the Copper Eskimos also, for two men in Dolphin and Union strait settled a dispute by pelting each other with dog excreta. As a rule, however, the quarrel is either dropped or settled in a more deadly manner."

"1. Mr. G.H. Wilkins witnessed a fight with fisticuffs in Prince Albert sound, but the combatants were merely youths."

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1: Jenness--94-95
116, 627, 682

(1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo

"A native who had a grudge against Ikpakhuak threatened to enter his hut one day when he was sleeping and shoot him, but as a hundred miles or more separated the two men, Ikpakhuak's tranquility remained undisturbed. In the winter of 1914-15 a Kanghiryuak woman named Keyuk taunted another woman of the same tribe with childlessness, and the latter stabbed her in the stomach with a knife and killed her. In the following year a man of the same people was sitting in his hut sharpening a knife that he had just made, when a neighbour entered and began to jeer at him [95] saying that he did not know how to make a knife. The owner quietly continued to sharpen his weapon until its edge was keen enough, then drove it into the jester's stomach with the remark, 'Now see if I can't make a knife.'

In neither of these cases, as far as my information goes, was the murderer punished. There is always the danger though that one day a relative of the deceased may avenge him by driving a knife into the murderer's back. Usually the danger is avoided by flight. A man named Ekkeahoak was stabbed near Lambert island, about 1913, by a companion named Hitkok. The murderer fled to the eastward, and in 1914 was living near Bathurst inlet. Ekkeahoak's daughter in speaking of the affair expressed no bitterness towards Hitkok, and probably if he had returned to Dolphin and Union strait he would have been left perfectly unmolested. Such at least was the opinion that other natives expressed; the murder had taken place long ago, they said, and no one wanted to remember it or

to wreak vengeance on the murderer.

Sometimes, even when the evildoer escapes scot-free, his purpose is frustrated by the rest of the community. Tamauyuk, an east Coronation gulf native, coveted King-ollik, the wife of a man named Ailanaluk, so one day when Ailanaluk was spearing fish Tamauyuk went up behind him and stabbed him to death with his knife. The murderer then took the woman from her tent and forced her to become his wife, but the other natives interfered and took her away from him.

About 1908, at Asiak, east of Kent peninsula, a woman named Mittik was accused of causing a man's death by sorcery. At once a quarrel arose, for this was a straight charge of murder, and a man was stabbed with a knife. He ran outside to get his rifle, but fell dead in the snow before he reached it. Another man stabbed his murderer, then three men were shot, but none fatally. The feud seems to have ended at this stage, no one being willing to carry it further. An even more serious affray had occurred in the same region a few years earlier. There had come to the settlement from Netsilik an elderly couple with three sons, the eldest of whom brought his wife with him. An Asiak native wanted to share the woman, but the young man objected to her having two husbands, and, when he could not prevent it, stabbed his wife with a spear as she was stooping down to enter her hut. The woman staggered outside and fell dead in the snow. Her father then came up, and with the help of some of the other natives seized the murderer and stabbed him to death. The second brother crept up behind them and stabbed the

father in the back, but the other natives pursued him and stabbed him also. They now decided to put an end to the vendetta by destroying the whole family, so they killed the old father and wounded the third son. This boy, however, managed to escape, while the second son, who had been stabbed with a knife, recovered through the care of his mother. Altogether four people were killed and two wounded in this affair.

A somewhat similar incident occurred among the Ekaluktomiut. A man named Savugaluk was stabbed in the dance-house one evening, but not killed outright. For many years he remained an invalid, unable to hunt or to do any work. Finally, as he was only a burden to the community, the Eskimos decided to take his wife away from him and leave him to starve to death. Savugaluk then stabbed his wife, so a man went into his hut and stabbed him. Thus both of them perished."

1: Jenness--96
116, 671, 627, 681

(1913-16) 1922

Copper Eskimo

"It is clear, therefore, that the maintenance of order in a Copper Eskimo community rests purely and simply on a basis of force. No man will commit a crime, save in the heat of passion, unless he believes that he can make good his escape until the affair blows over, or else that his kinsmen will support him against any attempt at revenge. Detection is certain; there is so little privacy in their lives that all the possessions and actions of a man are known to everyone around. Until recently, when firearms and steel knives and other articles of civilization were introduced, there was little inducement to steal, for practically all their possessions could be made or acquired without much labour. Murder, however, with its corollary, the blood-feud, has always been frequent, and nothing but external influence can prevent it. The natives came into conflict with civilized law for the first time in 1916, when a patrol of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police arrested and deported the murderers of the two French missionaries. (1) They learned then that the murder of a white man would inevitably lead to their paying the penalty at some time or another; but life will never be secured or progress possible to these natives unless swift and exemplary punishment is meted out for assassination within their own groups."

"1. Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, Ottawa, 1916."

13: Jenness--86-89
116, 682, 627

(1914-1916) 1917

Copper Eskimo

The [89] most trifling incident may lead to this result [AW: 'murder]. In 1914 a man stabbed another merely to prove that the knife his victim ridiculed was a good one. The murderer in turn is sometimes slain by the kinsmen of his victim and a vendetta is established, but in most cases this outcome is avoided by his flight to another district, when his deed, after the lapse of a few years, passes into oblivion."

29: Jenness E-5 (1914-1916) 1959
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Johansen, who wore an imperial, and I, who trimmed my beard once a week with a pair of No. o clippers, were quite elderly. They asked me at last whether the two former were not my sons. I gravely assured them they were not mine, but Johansen's.

Nothing disturbed the harmony of our relations until some natives from the settlement near the Liston and Sutton Islands reported that one of their young men had died a short time before, and openly accused me of his murder. They could not charge me with physical violence, for I was a hundred miles away on the Coppermine River at the time of his decease; but they said that I had stolen his soul by magic, and deliberately withheld it until his body pined away and died. Foolish as this accusation seemed, we could not blind ourselves to its seriousness. The Eskimos knew nothing of our law or of the police. Their own penalty for murder was assassination, unless the relatives of the dead man agreed to accept a heavy blood-price. They might not have dared to apply this penalty to me, because trading would cease immediately and my well-armed party make reprisals. But no one could say what would happen. Certainly it was not safe for me to wander in and out of their huts as freely as before; some hot-headed individual might forget discretion and stab me in the back as I crawled through a low doorway.

In spite of the preponderating sentiment against

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me, a few of my Eskimo friends s still believed in my innocence, and sought for an infl luential medicine-man who could unravel the mystery of the young man's death. Knife's arrival was well timed, for no medicine-man in the district enjoyed g reater prestige. The familiar spirits of which he was t the mouthpiece spoke infallible truth, and whether t hey pronounced me innocent or guilty the verdict w ould carry credence everywhere.

Palaiyak returned from the sn ow-huts on the beach one evening and whispered in my y ear that Knife was in the dance-house preparing to h old his investigation. I calculated the chances quickly. Knife knew that I spoke his language, and it was n ot in Eskimo nature to accuse a man of murder to his s face. Moreover he was crafty, and would consult his own interests before everything else. At the present t moment he sorely needed ammunition and other goods that I could supply. Would he dare to name m me guilty to my face? I decided to attend his séance a and hear the verdict myself.

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The people had ceased dancing g when I entered the hut and were whiling away the moments by singing without the drum. Half of them were drawn up in a circle; the remainder, for whom there was no room in the ring, formed knots of two and three in the background. Over in one corner stood Cockney, our English cook, who had been quietly watching the

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performances. He did not know that I was accused of murder, or that anything more was in progress than an ordinary dance, and it seemed wiser not to enlighten him. Knife himself sat on the sleeping-platform, paying no heed to what went on around him; but he glanced at me furtively when I entered and looked a trifle disconcerted.

The singing continued but a few minutes longer, when the impatient audience entreated Knife to summon his familiar spirits. He sat now with closed eyes, half dozing as it seemed. Suddenly he gasped, choking cries burst from his lips, and, staggering into the centre of the ring, he motioned me to stand near him. A quiver passed over the audience; at last the truth of the murder would be revealed. The choking cries gave place to wild gibberish, which his father, standing beside me, interpreted as the language of white men. Knife, less hysterical than he appeared, heard the old man's words, and, staring straight into my face, repeated his gibberish. *"Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum,"* I answered immediately in the first words of Latin that came into my head; and *"pamakalawilinilitoolooka,"* or something like it, he responded in his gibberish. My Latin gave out, and I continued the conversation in French, fearing to use English lest Cockney might ruin the little drama by some false move. The impression on the audience was immense; their shaman really was inspired by a

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white man's spirit, for how else could he understand and converse with me? So when he ceased his gibberish, and in broken syllables pronounced that it was a white man in a far distant country who had caused the young man's death, the faith that moves mountains was not stronger than their conviction of my innocence.

All this time Cockney had been viewing our antics with the greatest alarm. Knife held me hypnotized, he believed, and the tense faces of the audience turned in my direction made him dread some untoward incident. He dared not abandon me to my peril while he warned our companions at the house above. So he stood, like a vigilant sentry, prepared to leap to my rescue and battle against the overwhelming odds the moment the whistle sounded.

The séance lasted about two hours, and contained several minor incidents in which I played a leading rôle. Knife's audience was in the mood to credit any deception, and he was too shrewd to lose his opportunity. At one stage he led his first wife into the ring to execute a "white man's" reel, a kind of square dance they had learned at Great Bear Lake; and in his wild gibberish, made intelligible to me by signs, he bade me summon Cockney to join hands with the younger wife. The dance may not have been artistic, but it impressed the spectators more than ever with the wondrous knowledge of their medicine-man, who could both

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speak the white man's language and perform his intricate dances.

The performance ended at last, and the people began to disperse to their huts. Cockney, who was among the first to vanish, hastened to the station to describe my abnormal behaviour and organize a strong party that would bring me safely home. But before he had finished his narrative I myself arrived on the scene and offered a more reasonable explanation of my conduct.

The natives living out in the strait became very friendly again when the charge of murder was lifted from my head. I visited their settlement twice for periods of three or four days, staying each time with my old acquaintance, Ikpuck. The sun was now much higher in the sky, and a mildness in the atmosphere indicated the approach of spring. Snow-huts would soon be untenable; the slight melting of their ceilings around noon had already caused some of the people to move into large tents made of caribou skins. With the advent of longer days the hunters captured more seals, and the women were packing the surplus blubber into large bags to cache on the coast until autumn. Everything seemed to be changing. The various bands that had united in midwinter were separating out again and moving to different sealing-grounds; and every fortnight, as the new sealing-grounds became exhausted, they moved their settlements forward a few more miles.

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787 spirits took possession of his body. We listened to their stories courteously but incredulously, for we had heard similar tales of other medicine-men; and when he quietly informed us one morning that something was wrong with our schooner, that the thing which made it go had broken during the night, we paid no attention. What could he know about the vessel or its engine, since he had never seen a schooner before, nor indeed any boat that moved under sails or power? Yet that same afternoon we discovered a serious crack in the rafter supporting the roof of our kitchen, and the rafter was the schooner's jib-boom! Was it merely coincidence, I wonder, or did the old man really possess some uncanny power of which we, for all our vaunted knowledge, were ignorant?

000 As the days grew longer and the air warmer, the harbour became more deserted. Cox and O'Neill had already gone eastward to continue their survey of the coast, Anderson and Chipman had gone west to examine the Crocker River, and Johansen was explor-
221 ing the south coast of Victoria Island. The Musk-ox people returned to their home, and the local natives began to separate into small bands and move toward different hunting-grounds.

123 Suddenly a case of ammunition disappeared, and the
756 handful of natives who lingered beside us disclaimed
•627 all knowledge of the theft. Our old friend Knife could have enlightened us, for he always kept abreast

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of any mischief that was afoot; but his lips appeared sealed. The affair clearly called for strategy. In the quiet of the evening Girling and I critically compared rifles until the inquisitive Knife, drawn more and more into the discussion, rushed off at last to bring his own Winchester for a similar inspection. With his rifle securely in our hands we sprang the trap; we would not return it until he informed. The rascal scarcely hesitated; he not only revealed the name of the thief, but offered to guide us to his camp, since the man had already moved away toward Victoria Island. Morning saw our new ally running ahead of the dog-team, setting the course, while Girling and I, armed with automatics, trotted steadily in the rear, gripping the handle-bars of the sled.

All the men in the thief's village were absent at the sealing-ground when we halted our team, and only women and children had charge of the camp. We ransacked his tent inside and out, amid voluble protests from the outraged wife, who planted herself in front of each bag and tried to prevent its examination; her outcries subsided into an uneasy muttering when we uncovered thirty small boxes of the missing cartridges. Unable to find the remaining twenty we decided to await the thief himself, and deposited his bow and arrows on our sled to aid his memory.

After some hours an old man appeared in the distance, preceded by two dogs dragging a seal. The

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women hurried forward in a body to warn him of the hold-up, but he sent them back to their tents and approached us with a friendly greeting. "Remain quietly beside your sled," he said. "I will intercept each hunter as he comes in and counsel him to put away his harpoon. If the men have only knives in their hands there will be less danger of violence."

We thanked him for the advice, and waited quietly while the hunters planted their weapons in the snow outside the tents and gathered beside us. By chance or good fortune the thief arrived last. We advanced to meet him, all except the worthy Knife, who prudently mounted the sled well away from the scene of action that he might shout and gesticulate in perfect safety. The thief stopped short in his tracks, a look of terror spread over his face, and he rushed toward his tent, expecting instant death. Intercepted on every side, he struggled desperately until his strength failed; then, amazed to find himself still unharmed, he calmed down and showed us the hiding-place of seven more boxes. The rest he had given to a Coppermine River native who had moved so far away that we thought it hardly worth our while to pursue him.

This issue of the matter satisfied everyone. The thief, who received back his bow and arrows, escaped more lightly perhaps than he deserved, certainly more lightly than if he had robbed his own countrymen. But

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there were mitigating circumstances that pleaded in his favour. We were foreigners in their land, beings partly of another world, who were blessed with many wonderful things that the Eskimos lacked. Though kindly enough after our own peculiar fashion, we neither observed their customs concerning the sharing of food with neighbours, nor assumed the other obligations of their semi-communistic life. If we thus claimed exemption from the only social code they knew, could we fairly expect them to observe their moral code toward us, and regard our property as inviolate? It speaks highly of their character that nearly all of them did observe it, and not only dealt with us honestly, but reproved those of their countrymen who deviated from the accepted path. We had come to this camp prepared for serious trouble, but the goodwill of its inhabitants, prudently directed by the old man, relieved the situation of all danger.

Spring was now fast advancing, the surface of the snow was beginning to thaw under the noon sun, and the night was almost as bright as the day. Girling considered that it was time for him to go back to his vessel a hundred and fifty miles to the west, that he might sail into Bernard Harbour and establish his mission there as soon as the ice broke up in the strait. I offered to escort him, since the interpreter and dog-team he had brought to our station during the winter had long since returned. The trip would be only a

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the past, and a new mechanical age has brought magazine rifles, shotguns, steel traps, and even gasolene engines. The caribou are passing with the bows and arrows; of all the herds that once crossed the narrow strait to Victoria Island hardly one now reaches the Arctic shore. Strange diseases are making their appearance, disease that the old-time Eskimo never heard of and for which he has no name. The stern laws of civilization have descended on the land; no longer is infanticide tolerated, or the blood-feud allowed to run its course. "Furs, furs, more furs," is the white man's cry. "Without furs there is no salvation, no ammunition to shoot the scattered game and satisfy your hungry children." The tribal bands where each man toiled for all and shared his food in common are resolving into their constituent families, and every family vies with the rest in the race for wealth and worldly prosperity.

Whither will it all lead? Fifty years ago the cyclone swept over the Eskimos of the Mackenzie River delta, and of its two thousand inhabitants a scant two hundred survive. Fifty years earlier it struck Baffin Island with a similar result. Will history, fifty years hence, record the same fate for this twilight land where for two years we carried on our mission? Were we the harbingers of a brighter dawn, or only messengers of ill-omen, portending disaster?